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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 001926

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: CABINET SHUFFLE ANNOUNCED

Classified By: PolOff TJNaber, reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (U) Summary: A long-expected cabinet shuffle was announced November 18. New ministers include Finance, Economy, Industry, Energy, Agriculture, Primary Education, Culture and Arts, Higher Education, and Youth and Sports. A new governor of Province Orientale has also been appointed. End summary.

12. (SBU) The biggest news in the cabinet shuffle was the replacement of Finance Minister Andre Philippe Futa by Marco Banguli. Although both are members of the PPRD, Banguli joined the political party only last week, switching his membership from Kengo Wa Dondo's Union des Democratrs Independants (UDI). Banguli is a former Director General of Imports and a wealthy businessman with extensive real estate and commercial holdings. There is speculation that Banguli's appointment will help President Joseph Kabila in his election bid by potentially depriving Kengo of an important ally. (Note: Banguli is a member of the Teke-Humbu ethnic group which is well-represented in the Kinshasa area. End note.)

13. (C) Five other ministries saw their chiefs replaced:

- 1) Ministry of Economy - Pierre Manoka replaced Floribert Bokanga, nephew of Senator Justin Marie Bomboko, a powerful politician since Mobutu. (Comment: The Bomboko family political fortunes have been suffering somewhat in the transition, having been divided between the RCD and PPRD. End comment.) Manoka, who is a member of RCD as is Bokanga, is a political unknown.
- 2) Ministry of Industry - Mukendi Tshiambula, a little-known PPRD member, replaced Jean Mbuyu, also PPRD and a former security advisor to Joseph Kabila.
- 3) Ministry of Energy (PPRD) - Salomon Banamuhire, Minister of the Environment prior to the last reshuffle in March 2005, replaced Pierre Muzyumba, formerly the CEO of a parastatal.
- 4) Ministry of Culture and the Arts - Philemon Mukendi, one of two Deputy Secretary Generals for the PPRD and a former Vice Minister of Defense, replaced Christophe Muzungu, a former Kinshasa governor.
- 5) Ministry of Youth and Sports (MLC) - Jacques Lungwana, a political unknown and the son of a recently deceased senator from Bas Congo, replaced Roger Nimy, also of Bas Congo. (Comment: The decision to replace Nimy, leader of the MLC Bas Congo contingent, caused such an uproar in the group that Vice President Bemba was forced to offer Nimy a parastatal position in compensation. End comment.)

14. (SBU) In addition to the replacements, two sets of politicians traded jobs in the shuffle. Agriculture Minister Paul Musafiri (MLC) and Primary Education Minister Constant Ndom Nda Ombel swapped positions, as did Orientale province Governor Theo Baruti and Higher Education Minister Jean-Pierre Lola Kisanga. Musafiri, the new Primary Education Minister, was previously the magistrate of Goma, North Kivu and the Vice Minister of the Interior before becoming Minister of Agriculture. The shift to Education is another step in his rise up the MLC hierarchical ladder, but he takes over a thankless job, in light of ongoing labor issues between teachers and government.

15. (SBU) Ndom Nda Ombel, now Agriculture Minister, was a child soldier and Mobutu opponent turned Mobutu supporter in the early 1990s. He was Education Minister under Mobutu and was appointed to the same job during the March 2005 shuffle. Kisanga, now Orientale Governor, was a spokesperson for the RCD during the mid-1990s war; he was the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare until the March shuffle. Baruti, now Higher Education Minister, is also a member of the RCD and was sent by his party to the governorship in Province Orientale after accusations of mismanagement at the Ministry of Labor, his first post in the transitional government.

15. (C) Comment: This will almost certainly be the last shuffle for the Transition Government; those who survived will be well-positioned for elections campaigns to begin in early 2006. For the PPRD, it was the final chance to create some semblance of party organization, as senior Kabila advisor Augustin Katumba has been advocating for months. An interparty struggle between Minister of the Interior Theophile Mbemba and PPRD Secretary General Vitale Kamerhe was resolved in Mbemba's favor. Contrary to Kamerhe's

expressed desires, and due to strong advocacy on his own behalf by Mbemba, the Interior Minister position remains unchanged. Instead, the PPRD removed unpopular Finance Minister Futa and replaced the Minister of Energy. The MLC and RCD political parties also used the opportunity to make changes in important posts. For the RDC, former Orientale Governor Baruti was a liability who had done little to advance the party cause during his fifteen-month tenure. His replacement, Kisanga, will be much more active. In contrast, the MLC shuffle came at a poor time for Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba, whose prospects were severely damaged last week when National Assembly President Olivier Kamitatu (second in the MLC) jumped ship to join a coalition to support Pierre Pay Pay's presidential campaign, with Kamitatu promised the prime ministership if Pay Pay wins. End comment.

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